**Psalms 23:1-2**

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. **He maketh me** to lie down in green pastures: **he leadeth me** beside the still waters.”

Psalm 23 is David's testimony to the faithfulness of God to his soul. He writes it when he is old and looking back upon a life shepherded by his God. He can testify after years of experience that the LORD was his Shepherd and that his Shepherd led him in the way that he should go.

As his Shepherd, the LORD had shown Himself to be David's Provider, Protector, and **Director in life and living – his Guide through time and into eternity**.

David's testimony in this Psalm includes a declaration of God's faithfulness to provide David with Peace - Comfort - Direction - Protection and Provision - Goodness and Mercy - and with Everlasting Satisfaction.

**In verse two -** David testifies, “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.” (**Psalms 23:2**)

As the Good Shepherd of all His sheep it is the responsibility of the Lord Jesus Christ to lead His sheep.

**A. The Lord’s sheep begin their Christian life by being led.**

They are led out of where they were by nature and they are led into the place where only the Good Shepherd could bring them.

**1. In the Old Testament we have the example of the nation of Israel.**

**Deuteronomy 6: 23** – “And **he brought us out** from thence, that **he might bring us in**, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.”

**2. In the New Testament we have this example set forth in many verses.**

**Colossians 1:13** – “Who hath **delivered us from** the power of darkness, and hath **translated us into** the kingdom of his dear Son:”

**Romans 6:17-18** – “(17) But God be thanked, that **ye were the servants of sin**, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. (18) Being then made free from sin, **ye became the servants of righteousness**.”

We are led out of what we were and into what we shall be!

**B. The Christian’s life is characterized by being led.**

**The Old Testament - Psalms 23:2-3** – “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: **he leadeth me** beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.”

**Isaiah 49:9-10** – “(9) That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. (10) They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: **for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them**, even by the springs of water **shall he guide them**.”

**The New Testament –**

**By Precept - Romans 8:14** – “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

**By Practice -- Luke 18:35-43** – “(35) And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: (36) And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. (37) And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. (38) And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. (39) And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. (40) And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, (41) Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. (42) And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. (43) And **immediately he received his sight, and followed him**, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.”

**Note**: Every sinner saved by the Lord Jesus Christ follows Him in the way He leads. The blind man who received his sight “immediately … followed him!”

**C. Christians are led into a life of Peace and Comfort (green pastures and still waters)**

Sheep are weak and defenseless creature. They will not lie down with out the knowledge that they are safe and secure.

**1. As lost sheep we were troubled and without peace.**

**Isaiah 57:20-21** – “But the wicked are like the **troubled** sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is **no peace**, saith my God, to the wicked.”

**2. When converted, the sheep have a Shepherd whose name is The Prince (ruler) of Peace.**

**Isaiah 9:6** – “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called … **The Prince of Peace**.”

**Ephesians 2:4** – “For he is our peace …”

**3. The Shepherd calls His sheep out of the wilderness of sin and into the peacefulness of eternal salvation. They are kept in the place of peace and security by the power of their Shepherd King - Jesus Christ.**

**John 10:27-30** – (27) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me (28) And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, **neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand**. (29) My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and **no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand**. (30) I and my Father are one.”

**I Peter 1:3-5** -- “(3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope … (4) To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled … for you, (5) Who are kept by the power of God ...”

David knows how God shepherds His people. He has been cared for by His God all his life. David knows that God's normal way of leading His people is to lead them to green pastures and still waters. God’s work is a slow and silent work – it is a work done in green pastures and beside still waters.

**Elijah learned this after the fire of God fell upon Mount Carmel.**

**I Kings 19:11-13** -- “(11) And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; **but the LORD was not in the wind**: and after the wind an earthquake; **but the LORD was not in the earthquake**: (12) And after the earthquake a fire; **but the LORD was not in the fire**: and after the fire **a still small voice.** (13) And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle …”

**Paul learned this in his day to day ministry.**

**Romans 14:17-18** – “(17) For **the kingdom of God is** not meat and drink; but righteousness, and **peace**, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (18) For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.”

**II Thessalonians 3:16** – “Now **the Lord of peace** himself give you **peace** always by all means. The Lord be with you all”

Every Christian learns this in their day to day service to their Lord.

**D. Christians are led into a life of Good (green pastures and still waters)**

The sheep are precious to the Shepherd therefore all He does for them; He does for their good.

**Romans 8:28** – “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

**E. Christians are led into a life of Satisfaction (green pastures and still waters).**

Sheep will not lie down unless they have full stomachs and a full sense of security.

**Full Stomachs -- John 6:35** – “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me **shall never hunger**; and he that believeth on me **shall never thirst**.”

**John 4:13-14** – “Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him **shall never thirst**; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

These verses do not teach us that we will never hunger or thirst again – we will –

Jesus said those who hunger and thirst are blessed! **Matthew 5:6** – “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”

What verses like **John 6:35** and **John 4:13-14** teach us is that as Christians, we hunger and thirst for righteousness – and are always satisfied to find what we need in our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Colossians 2:10** – “And **ye are complete in him**, which is the head of all principality and power:”

**Note**: We are not only complete in Jesus Christ – but we are completely satisfied with Jesus Christ alone!

**Note**: What these verses are teaching is that the LORD’s sheep no longer hunger and thirst for the world because we are completely satisfied with our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Psalms 65:4** – “Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: **we shall be satisfied** with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.”

**Psalm 36:8** – “They **shall be abundantly satisfied** with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.”

**Finally**: the Sheep are Satisfied to follow their Shepherd wherever He might lead them. They trust His providence in their overall day to day life.

**First: They have the Promise of their Shepherd to direct their steps:**

**Psalm 16:11** – “Thou wilt shew me the path of life …” – Both before we are converted and after.

**Psalm 40:2** – “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established (fixed) my goings.” – i.e. fixed my path into that which He would have me to walk.

**Note**: As I am walking - - as I am following the Lord Jesus Christ -- I might turn to the right hand of to the left – yet I am assured that the Lord – my Shepherd – will guide me back to the pathway of righteousness.

**Proverbs 16:9** – “A man's heart deviseth his way: but **the LORD directeth his steps**.”

**Psalm 37:23** – “**The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD**: and he delighteth in his way.”

**Second: Because of the promise of God’s word, they are inclined to Pray to their Shepherd to order their steps.**

**Psalm 17:15** – “Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.”

**Psalm 119:133** – “Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.”